



## **Safe Shopping Tips**

### **Parking Lot Safety**

- Shop early and leave early to avoid shopping in the dark.
- Park in a well-lighted area with good visibility in case you are shopping after dark.
- DO NOT park between larger vehicles or vehicles with dark tinted windows. Waiting assailants can be obscured from view upon your return.
- Before shopping, hide all of your valuables in the trunk prior to parking at the mall.
- Leave with a group of people rather than alone whenever possible.
- If you feel uncomfortable, ask a security officer to escort you to your vehicle.
- Walk briskly, confidently, and directly through the parking lot. Be cautious of people handing out fliers or asking questions in the parking lot.
- Watch for people who may be following you. This can occur inside or outside of the store. If you suspect you are being followed, report it to mall or store security immediately.

### **While You Are Shopping**

- Be aware of your surroundings and the people around you.
- Shop with a friend, there is safety in numbers.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash.
- Pay for purchases with a check, credit, or debit card whenever possible.
- If possible, carry only checks, credit, or debit cards.
- If you must carry a purse, do not wrap the straps around your arm or shoulders. You could risk injury if your purse is grabbed by a purse snatcher. Carry a clutch purse tightly under your arm or wear a fanny pack.
- Wallets should be carried in a front pocket.
- Be alert, criminals target high dollar store shopping bags. When possible, slip bags/purchases in a plain nondescript bag.
- Do not over burden yourself with too many packages. This compromises your safety while walking to your vehicle. Either make multiple trips or have your purchases sent to package pick-up where you can retrieve them in a well-lit highly populated area.
- If you do return to your vehicle to unload packages and continue shopping, place your purchases in the trunk. Be observant of anyone watching, and, if possible, move the vehicle to another parking space location to deter a vehicle break-in.
- Be sure you educate your children about what to do if they are lost as well as what to do if a stranger should try and take them.

- Try not to shop until the store closes. Remember, fewer people are present when stores are closing.
- Have your car keys ready before leaving the store. They also make a great weapon, should you need to defend yourself.